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Soviet Union Eastern Europe

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Jewish Emigration Rates
Continue Below 1974 Levels

Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union in 1975 has averaged slightly over one thousand people a month through October (10,738 total) down approximately 30 percent from the same period last year.

[REDACTED] 1,460 Jews emigrated in October. This is the highest monthly figure for the year, but is still some 30 percent below 1974. Last month's total thus follows the pattern in recent years of upswings in October and November, and is probably not a shift in Soviet emigration policy.

Official harassment of prospective emigrants in recent weeks has reportedly remained at about the same level. The US embassy describes the situation of the Moscow Jewish community as "no worse" than it was six months ago, although morale among the capital's Jewish dissidents appears to be sagging. The embassy adds, however, that harassment may have increased in provincial cities, particularly those closed to foreigners. Many Jews evidently are keeping open their option to emigrate without actually applying. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] renewal of the required individual invitations from Israel remains at a high level.

Applications for emigration to Israel are still the easiest, often the only, course for many seeking to leave the USSR, but a growing number of emigrants change their destination once they are out of the country.

[REDACTED]
at least 44 percent of the Soviet Jews with visas for Israel who reached the main transit point--Vienna--in October have decided to settle elsewhere. Some of the others leave Israel soon after arrival. (CONFIDENTIAL NOFORN/ORCON)



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Soviets May Recognize the MPLA

Soviet recognition of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola could come as early as today if, as expected, the Popular Movement proclaims itself the sole legitimate governing authority in the former Portuguese colony.

The most authoritative Soviet commentary on Angola appeared last weekend in a *Pravda* commentary signed "Observer," which indicates it was endorsed by the Kremlin. The article implied that Moscow was moving toward official recognition of the Popular Movement, but it also suggested that the Soviets were becoming increasingly nervous about the sagging military fortunes of the MPLA.

The "Observer" article reserved its heaviest brickbats for the "racist" regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia, perhaps in an effort to elicit additional support for the Popular Movement from other Black African states on Angolan independence day.

It made the usual charges against the Chinese but, in contrast to earlier Soviet commentary, did not directly mention US support for anti-MPLA forces. This could mean that Moscow intends to play down the line that the US and China are on the same side, particularly since the prospects of the anti-MPLA have grown brighter. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Soviets Put New Emphasis on Geneva Conference

Moscow has publicized its note to the US yesterday calling for the reconvening of the Geneva Conference. The note indicates a hardening in Moscow's attitude toward the format for Middle East peace talks. In recent months, Moscow has not stressed Geneva, suggesting instead that the USSR was interested in participating in further partial peace steps. Although the Soviet note does not explicitly rule out additional interim measures in which they have a role--such as another Golan Heights disengagement agreement--it calls the Geneva Conference "the only correct road" to a settlement.

Of particular significance is Moscow's assertion that representatives of the PLO must participate in the conference "from the very beginning." Heretofore, the Soviets have used vaguer language regarding Palestinian representation and privately indicated they were considering a variety of approaches to the question. Moscow knows Palestinian representation at Geneva from the start is unacceptable to the US and Israel.

Publication of the note with its formula for Palestinian representation indicates the statement is meant for the record rather than as a serious Soviet effort to reconvene the conference. Its publication may foreshadow an even more assertive Soviet profile in support of the Arabs. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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A More Active Role in CEMA for Hanoi

As a result of the Soviet - North Vietnamese talks in Moscow late last month, Hanoi has evidently agreed to play a more visible and active role in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA), but it will probably continue to spurn full CEMA membership.

A Soviet source recently said that the expanded relationship will include coordination of economic plans, participation in some CEMA permanent commissions, and multilateral aid projects. He added that, for the present, coordination of economic plans will be confined to the foreign trade sector, an area where Moscow has already had a considerable, though informal, input.

This loose formulation of Hanoi's multilateral ties holds some advantages for both parties. Moscow has long attempted to broaden the scope of CEMA, and CEMA participation in Vietnamese reconstruction and development projects will boost the international image of the organization as well as be a plus for Moscow in the Sino-Soviet competition for influence in Southeast Asia. The North Vietnamese will continue their balancing act between the Soviet Union and China, but will welcome whatever economic assistance they can get. For its part, Peking will undoubtedly be concerned over the appearance of a closer North Vietnamese relationship with CEMA. (CONFIDENTIAL)



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Further Preparations for
the 25th Party Congress

All but three of the republics--Kirgizia, Latvia, and Lithuania--have now set dates for their party congresses in preparation for the 25th Party Congress scheduled for February 24, 1976.

Since our October 6, 1975 listing, the following congresses have been scheduled:

<u>PARTY CONGRESSES</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Azerbaijdzhan	January 28, 1976
Georgia	January 22, 1976
Moldavia	January 29, 1976
Tadzhikistan	January 27, 1976
Turkmenistan	January 23, 1976

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Soviet Visitor Highlights During October

About 125 Soviets were authorized to enter the US for commercial purposes during the month of October--an increase of more than 60 percent over September. October visitors included Soviet maritime delegations here for negotiations with US shipping firms and the usual contingent of engineers and technicians from the troubled Kama Motor Vehicle Plant, now under heavy pressure to produce its first truck before the 25th CPSU Congress convenes in February 1976.

A busy, but otherwise routine month, October was highlighted by two meetings of US-USSR commissions that drew important officials from the Soviet bureaucracy.

--A meeting of the Executive Committee of the US-USSR Trade and Economic Council brought two deputy ministers of foreign trade--Vladimir Alkhimov and Vladimir Sushkov--and the chairman of the Soviet Chamber of Trade and Industry, Boris Borisov.

--The Fourth Session of the Joint US-USSR Commission on Environmental Protection drew a large Soviet delegation that included Deputy Minister of Agriculture Boris Runov. The delegation was headed by Yuriy Izrael, chief of the Main Administration of Hydrometeorological Service, who was received at the White House by President Ford.
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